



Fall Session Update

With the fall legislative floor period winding down in early November, the WASB Government Relations (GR) team would like to take this opportunity to give brief summaries and the status of selected K-12 education-related initiatives. For more in-depth and timely information on these proposals and more, visit the WASB Legislative Update Blog at wasb.org (click on Legislative Update under “Advocacy and Government Relations”).

Restrictions on School Referenda

Rep. Michael Schraa (R-Oshkosh) & Sen. Duey Stroebel (R-Cedarburg)
This proposal would require school district referenda ballot dates to coincide with a regularly scheduled spring or fall general election and prevent a school board from bringing a new referendum request for two years if a referendum is voted down. This bill has not yet been introduced at this writing. **(WASB: Oppose)**

Allow School Board Members to Serve as Volunteer Coaches (Senate Bill 217)

Sen. Julie Lassa (D-Stevens Point) & Rep. Nancy VanderMeer (R-Tomah)
This bill creates a statutory exception to the common law doctrine of incompatibility of offices to expressly allow a school board member to act as a volunteer coach or supervisor for an extracurricular activity if it is an unpaid position, the member abstains from voting on issues directly or substantially related to the activity, and the member submits to a criminal back-

ground check. This bill passed the legislature with bipartisan support and is expected to be signed into law soon. **(WASB: Support)**

Eliminating the Energy Efficiency Revenue Limit Exemption

Rep. Adam Neylon (R-Pewaukee) & Sen. Frank Lasee (R-De Pere)
This proposal would end the school district revenue limit exemption for energy efficiency projects. Currently, a school board may adopt a resolution to increase the revenue limit by an amount spent on a project to implement energy efficiency measures or to purchase energy efficiency products. This bill has not yet been introduced at this writing. **(WASB: Oppose)**

Exempt Contractor-Purchased School Building Materials from Sales Tax (SB 227/AB 313)

Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) & Rep. Bob Kulp (R-Stratford)
Under current law, school districts are exempt from paying sales and use taxes on purchases of building materials for school construction projects. However, a construction contractor hired by a district may not receive the exemption for materials they purchase on behalf of the district. This bill would make these purchases exempt from sales and use taxes under both circumstances. These bills have not been taken up by either house at this writing. **(WASB: Support)**

Make State Superintendent Appointee of Governor

Rep. Joe Sanfelippo (R-New Berlin)

This proposed constitutional amendment would convert the state superintendent of public instruction from a nonpartisan elected position to a political appointee of the governor. A proposed constitutional amendment requires approval by the Legislature in two consecutive sessions and ratification from statewide voters to be adopted. No proposal has yet been introduced as of this writing. **(WASB: Oppose)**

Filling School Board Vacancies (Assembly Bill 325)

Rep. Tom Weatherston (R-Caledonia) & Sen. Van Wanggaard (R-Racine)
This bill, as amended, allows the school board president of the Racine Unified School District to unilaterally fill a vacancy that has existed for at least 60 days. This authority ends in April 2016. Under the bill, every school board must adopt a policy by July 1, 2016, on how the board will fill a vacancy if the remaining members cannot fill it within 60 days. This bill passed the Assembly on Sept. 24 on a party-line vote and is awaiting Senate action. **(WASB: Neutral)**

The GR team will provide a more in-depth legislative update at the WASB Legislative Advocacy Conference in Stevens Point on Saturday, Nov. 7. WASB members are encouraged to attend. By then, we will be able to report on how each of these proposals fared in the fall floor period and let you know about any other emerging legislation.

As always, to view all state legislation affecting K-12 education and the WASB's position on those bills, please check the WASB bill tracking chart: bit.ly/wasbilltracking. ■

For more in-depth and timely information on these proposals and more, visit WASBLegUpdate.wordpress.com.